

Urban District Council of Abram



Annual Report

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for the year 1950

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OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS
OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

Medical Officer of Health: G. H. POTTER, M.B., Ch.B.,
M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Consultant Obstetrician to Ante-Natal Clinic: R. L.
HARTLEY, M.D., F.R.C.S., M.R.C.O.G.

Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon: H. B. BARKER, M.B.,
B.S.(Lond.), M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

County Dental Surgeon: T. N. ASHALL, L.D.S.(Liv.).

Sanitary Inspector: A. JAMIESON, A.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

Abram Urban District Council

To the Chairman and Members of the
Public Health Committee.

Sir, and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present an Interim Report on the health of the district for the year 1950 compiled in the abbreviated form indicated by the Ministry of Health.

I take this opportunity of tendering my best thanks to the officials of the Council and especially to the Sanitary Inspector for valuable help and co-operation at all times.

I desire also to express to the members of the Public Health Committee my appreciation of the courtesy and consideration they have always displayed towards me.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

G. H. POTTER,

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area: 1,984 acres.

Population (Census, 1931): 6,660.

Estimated Mid-1950 (Registrar-General): 6,205.

Number of inhabited houses at end of 1950 according to Rate Book: 1,754.

Rateable Value: £19,656.

Sum represented by a Penny Rate: £91.

Abram is essentially a colliery district. In addition, agriculture and dairy farming is carried on in the district.

Most of the inhabitants are employed in the mines, but a fair percentage find work in surrounding townships in cotton mills.

VITAL STATISTICS.

	Male	Female	Total
Live Births:			
Legitimate	61	46	107
Illegitimate	2	3	5
Total	63	49	112
Still Births:			
Legitimate	2	2	4
Illegitimate	—	—	—
Total	2	2	4
Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age:			
Legitimate	1	2	3
Illegitimate	—	—	—
Total	1	2	3
Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age:			
Legitimate	1	—	1
Illegitimate	—	—	—
Total	1	—	1
Deaths	27	33	60

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated home population, mid-1950	17.5
Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated home population ...	11.7
Still Birth Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births	34
No. of women dying in, or in consequence of, pregnancy and childbirth:	
From puerperal and post-abortive sepsis	Nil
From other maternal causes	Nil
Maternal death rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births):	
Due to puerperal and post-abortive sepsis	Nil
Due to other causes	Nil
Death rate of infants under one year of age: .	
All infants per 1,000 live births	27
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births ...	28
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births...	Nil
Neo-natal mortality:	
Deaths of infants under 4 weeks of age	1
Mortality rate per 1,000 live births	9
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	9
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	Nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	Nil

TABLE 1.

	Per 1,000 of estimated population			
	Live Birth Rate	Crude Death Rate	Death Rate from Tuber- culosis of Respiratory System	Cancer Death Rate
Mean of 5 years 1945-1950 ..	19.6	12.2	0.10	1.33
Year 1949	18.8	11.6	Nil	1.14
1950	18.0	9.7	0.48	—*
Increase or decrease in 1950 on 5 years average 1945- 1949	—1.6	—2.5	+0.38	—
Previous year	—0.8	—1.9	+0.48	—

* In view of the fact that the particulars of cancer deaths supplied for 1950 are not strictly comparable with those of previous years, the cancer death rate for 1950 has been omitted.

Maternal Mortality Rate

	Per 1,000 Live Births	Per 1,000 Total (Live and Still) Births	Rate of Deaths Under 1 year per 1,000 Live Births
Mean of 5 years 1945-1950 ..	1.73	1.69	52
Year 1949	Nil	Nil	52
1950	Nil	Nil	27
Increase or decrease in 1950 on 5 years average 1945- 1949	—1.73	—1.69	—25
Previous year	Nil	Nil	—25

In the next table are shown the chief causes of death and number of deaths from each cause in 1950.

TABLE B.

Cause of Death	1950		
	Male	Female	Total
Tuberculosis (Respiratory)	2	1	3
Tuberculosis (Non-Respiratory)	—	—	—
Diphtheria	—	—	—
Whooping Cough	—	—	—
Meningococcal Infections	—	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis	—	—	—
Measles	—	—	—
Cancer (all types)	4	5	9
Leukæmia Aleukæmia	—	—	—
Diabetes	1	1	2
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	5	3	8
Coronary Disease, Angina	4	1	5
Hypertension with Heart Disease	—	1	1
Other Heart Disease	2	10	12
Other Circulatory Disease	2	2	4
Influenza	—	—	—
Pneumonia	—	—	—
Bronchitis	2	—	2
Other Respiratory Diseases	1	—	1
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum	—	—	—
Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhœa	—	—	—
Nephritis and Nephrosis	—	—	—
Hyperplasia of Prostate	1	—	1
Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion	—	—	—
Congenital Malformations	1	1	2
Suicide, Accidents	1	2	3
All other Causes	1	6	7
Total	27	33	60

2. GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

Bacteriological examinations are carried out at the laboratory of Wigan Infirmary and at the Public Health Laboratory, Monsall Hospital, Manchester, and the arrangements are satisfactory. A report on every examination is made to the Public Health Department.

During 1950 reports were made to the Authority on the following specimens:—

2	samples of water.
6	„ ice cream.
15	„ milk.

Ambulance Arrangements.

Infectious, non-infectious, accident and maternity cases are dealt with by the motor ambulances belonging to Lancashire County Council, stationed at Hindley and Ashton-in-Makerfield Ambulance Stations. The service is adequate and satisfactory.

3. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply.

The water supply to the district is obtained from the Rivington Aqueduct belonging to the Liverpool Corporation, and in the event of any breakdown an emergency supply is obtained from Ince-in-Makerfield.

The supply of water to the district was examined twice bacteriologically during the year 1950 and found to be satisfactory.

All the houses in the district have a piped supply of water from the main.

Drainage and Sewerage.

The separate system of drainage: storm water kept separated from sewage is used throughout the district.

The sewage being treated at the sewage works by means of triple contact beds. Mining subsidence is seriously affecting the sewer and disposal plant.

Drain testing, flushing, etc. is carried out as required.

Rivers and Streams.

No action has been required with regard to the pollution of streams.

Sanitary Accommodation (at end of 1950).

Number of privy middens	21
„ closets attached to privy middens ...	35
„ pail closets	6
„ fresh water closets	2,056
„ waste water closets	Nil
„ dry ashpits for refuse	28
„ movable ashbins for refuse	1,706
„ houses on water carriage system	1,713

During the year five privy middens were converted to water closets and, as a result, five movable ashbins were substituted for fixed receptacles.

Fresh water closet accommodation is provided for all new property erected in the district.

Public Cleansing.

Street scavenging and removal of house refuse is carried out by the Local Authority.

Privy middens and ashbins are emptied regularly by day throughout the year and one Karrier Bantam motor vehicle is engaged in the removal of refuse to controlled tips.

There is no destructor in the district.

The removal of house refuse is supervised by the Sanitary Inspector.

Sanitary Inspections of the Area.

Number of premises visited	957
„ nuisances discovered	661
„ nuisances abated	599
„ informal notices served	196
„ statutory notices served	34
„ legal proceedings	2

Shops and Offices.

All shops within the district are inspected twice annually. No action has been taken during the year.

Offices are also kept under observation and inspected periodically.

Camping Sites.

There are none in the district.

Smoke Abatement.

Contact is maintained between the officer of the Public Health Department and local works managers with regard to smoke abatement.

There are two factory and works chimneys in the district.

Swimming Baths and Pool.

There are none in the district.

Disinfestation of Verminous Premises.

7 premises were found to be infested and were dealt with by spraying with Killercide containing 5 per cent. D.D.T. This method has proved efficient.

Offensive Trades.

There are none in the district.

Common Lodging Houses.

There are none in the district.

Factories.

8 visits were paid to factories under the Factories Act, 1937, and their condition was found to be satisfactory.

Canal Boats.

Two canal boats were inspected during the year and no infringements of Acts were discovered.

Schools.

All schools in the area are supplied with water from the mains.

Water closet accommodation in all schools is of the fresh water type, each with its own flushing cistern. Regular lime-washing of conveniences is arranged for by the Education Authority in the case of all schools in the area.

4. HOUSING.

The township consists chiefly of working-class houses of the two-bedroom type, built in rows.

Mining subsidence is responsible for much damage to structure and old houses are continuously in the need of repairs, which are rendered difficult by the shortage of labour and building material.

Although the worst of pre-war overcrowding was relieved, there are over 400 applications for council houses.

A scheme is in hand for the provision of 100 permanent houses to alleviate the housing position.

Housing Statistics.

Number of new houses erected during the year:—

Traditional Permanent Houses:

(i) By the Local Authority	...	...	...	...	36
(ii) By other Authorities	...	...	...	...	—
(iii) By other bodies and persons	...	...	...	...	—

Permanent Prefabricated Houses:

(i) By the Local Authority	...	...	...	...	Nil
(ii) By other Authorities	...	...	...	...	—
(iii) By other bodies and persons	...	...	...	...	—

1. Inspection of dwelling houses during the year:—

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected formally or informally for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)...	...	...	...	...	275
(b) Number of inspections, formal or informal, made for the purpose	...	...	...	...	602
(2) (a) Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 and 1932	...	...	...	...	13
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	...	...	...	...	26
(3) Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	12
(4) Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	120

2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices:—

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the local authority or their officers	177
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3. Action under statutory powers during the year:—

(a) Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	1
(2) Number of dwelling houses which, after service of formal notices, were rendered fit:—	
(a) By owners	1
(b) By local authority in default of owners ...	—

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	34
(2) Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:	
(a) By owners	28
(b) By local authority in default of owners ...	Nil

(c) Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	Nil
(2) Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	Nil

(d) Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:

(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	Nil
(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	Nil

4. Housing Act, 1936—Part IV—Overcrowding—

(a) (i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year (approx.)	36
(ii) Number of families dwelling therein (approx.)	50
(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein (approx.)	170

(b)	Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	...	...	...	...	...	3
(c)	(i)	Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	...	...	...	...	4
	(ii)	Number of persons concerned in such cases	...	...	...	...	16

5. Housing Act, 1949:—

(a)	(i)	Number of Schemes submitted:					
	(a)	By private individuals	...	...	...	...	Nil
	(b)	By the local authority	...	...	...	...	—
	(ii)	Number of dwelling houses affected	...	...	...	...	—
(b)	(i)	Number of Schemes approved:					
	(a)	Of private individuals	...	...	...	...	—
	(b)	Of the local authority	...	...	...	...	—
	(ii)	Number of dwelling houses affected	...	...	...	...	—
	(iii)	Number of additional separate dwellings provided	...	...	...	...	—

5. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(a) Milk Supply.

An adequate supply of milk is produced within, or brought into, the district.

During 1950, 15 samples of raw milk were submitted for bacteriological and tuberculosis biological examinations and were found to be satisfactory.

The Veterinary Inspector of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries carried out an inspection of one of the farms in the district and, as a result, one cow was slaughtered under the Tuberculosis Order, 1938.

Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949.

The number of registered distributors operating from:

(a)	Own dairies in the district	...	...	Nil
(b)	Dairy farms in the district	...	...	14
(c)	Premises outside the district	...	...	4

The Milk (Special Designation) (Raw Milk) Regulations, 1949.

Under these regulations, 2 licences were issued in respect of the distribution of Tuberculin Tested Milk.

The Milk (Special Designation) (Pasteurised and Sterilised) Regulations, 1949.

7 Pasteurised and 24 Sterilised licences were issued to dealers under these regulations.

(b) Meat.

There is no slaughter-house in the district used by the Ministry of Food, but there is one used for self-suppliers' Pig Scheme.

Under this scheme, 30 pigs were slaughtered, and all of these were inspected by the Sanitary Inspector. No carcase, part, or any organ was condemned.

Routine inspections are made of meat shops, etc., and the Clean Meat Regulations are enforced.

No legal proceedings were necessary during the year.

(c) Clean Food Campaigns.

During the year circular letters have been sent to all persons engaged in the Food Industries giving hints on cleanliness and personal hygiene. These have been followed by regular visits to food premises by the Sanitary Inspector.

Byelaws under section 15 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, have been submitted to the Ministry of Food for approval, and these should be in force in 1951.

Various food premises are registered under the Lancashire County Council (Rivers Board and General Powers) Act, 1938.

(d) Ice Cream.

There is no ice cream manufacturer in the district. All ice cream sold in shops is wrapped; 6 samples were submitted and found to be satisfactory.

(e) Food Poisoning.

No case of food poisoning was notified during 1950.

6. PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

During 1950, cases of infectious disease requiring hospital treatment were removed to Astley Sanatorium and to Whelley Hospital.

Six cases of Scarlet Fever were notified during the year, against 12 in 1949, and of the 6 cases 2 were removed to hospital for treatment.

Two cases of Acute Poliomyelitis—one Paralytic, the other Non-Paralytic—were notified during the year and both were removed to hospital.

No case of Diphtheria was notified.

Supplies of Diphtheria Anti-toxin are kept at the Divisional Health Office and at the local hospitals and are always available to Medical Practitioners.

Free immunisation against diphtheria is provided for any pre-school or school child, and is performed by the Medical Officer at the clinic.

During 1950, 65 pre-school and 66 school children completed a full course of primary immunisation with two injections of alum precipitated toxoid. In addition, 101 children were given a secondary or reinforcing injection.

No preliminary and no post-Schick tests were undertaken.

No immunisation against the enteric group was undertaken during 1950.

During the last quarter of the year there was an epidemic of measles, during which 113 cases were notified.

No local action has been taken with regard to the use of measles serum for prophylaxis or attenuation, and there are no existing facilities for the typing of pneumococci and for the provision of appropriate type serum.

The general standard of cleanliness and habits in the district remains high, and the cases of infestation by head lice dealt with at the clinic were very few, and were successfully treated with D.D.T. Emulsion.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES (other than Tuberculosis) NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR 1950

Notifiable Diseases	Total cases at all ages							Total cases removed to hospital from the district			
	0-	1-	3-	5-	10-	15-	25-	45-	65 and over		
Scarlet Fever	6	—	2	3	1	—	—	—	—	2	
Whooping Cough	11	4	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Acute Poliomyelitis:											
(a) Paralytic	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	
(b) Non-Paralytic	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	
Measles (excluding rubella)	113	6	28	35	44	—	—	—	—	—	
Acute Pneumonia (primary and influenzal)	5	1	1	1	—	1	—	1	—	—	
Erysipelas	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	
Totals	138	11	32	41	50	1	1	2	—	5	

Disinfection.

Disinfection of premises and materials is carried out by the staff of the Public Health Department.

All houses are dealt with on death, removal to hospital or release from isolation of infectious cases.

During 1950, 4 houses were disinfected by the Department.

Houses are disinfected by Formaldehyde spray and, as a result of arrangements with the Hindley Urban District, all bedding, etc., is removed and disinfected by steam.

Cancer.

9 deaths (4 males and 5 females) were certified as due to cancer during the year, compared with 7 in 1949.

Facilities for radium treatment are available to Abram residents at the Radium Institute, Manchester, and at Wigan Infirmary, which, for this purpose, is a sub-clinic of the Manchester centre.

Prevention of Blindness.

No local action has been taken under section 176 of the Public Health Act, 1936, for the prevention of blindness or for the treatment of persons suffering from any disease or injury to the eyes.

Administration of the Blind Persons Act, 1920, is undertaken in this area by the staff of the County Medical Officer of Health.

Tuberculosis.

This is under the control of the Regional Hospital Board, and Abram cases attend the Dispensary situated at Millgate, Wigan.

Four new cases of tuberculosis were notified during 1950, all four being of pulmonary. Three deaths were registered during the year.

Notification of the disease in the district is quite satisfactory and no action has been necessary under the Public Health Act, 1936, relating to the compulsory removal of tuberculosis patients to hospital.

The following table shows the new cases of tuberculosis in age groups:—

Age Periods	New Cases		Deaths	
	Respiratory		Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.
25 years	2	—	1	1
55 „	2	—	1	—
	4	—	2	1
Total	4		3	

National Assistance Act, 1948.

No action was taken during 1950 under Section 47 of this Act.

